

The Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP)



Presentation Overview

- **DSS in general:** \$5.5 billion agency serving 750,000 CT residents
- **Since 2001:** smaller agency serving more people
- **SNAP:** booming program, expanded eligibility (2009), complex rules
- **SNAP historical trends**
- **Challenges and error rates**
- **How agency is attacking the problem**



An Overview of DSS

- The Connecticut Department of Social Services administers over 90 programs that make a difference in the lives of approximately 750,000 residents of our state annually.
- Our mission is to:
 - Meet basic needs of food, shelter, economic support & health care.
 - Promote and support the choice to live with dignity in one's own home and community.
 - Promote and support the achievement of economic viability in the workforce.

3



An Overview of DSS



- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Economic Viability – TANF• Social Work• Child Support• Health Care<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HUSKY, Charter Oak, Medicaid, CADAP, ConnPACE• SNAP• Vocational Rehabilitation Services• Disability Determination Services• Winter Heating Aid• Fatherhood Initiative | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Weatherization• Childcare• Connecticut Homecare Program for Elders• Traumatic Brain Injury Services• Grandparents as Parents• Housing Assistance<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RAP, Sec 8, Security Deposit, Shelters• Teen Pregnancy Prevention• Elderly Nutrition Program |
|---|---|

4

An Overview of DSS

\$5.5 billion

in expenditures in SFY 2010

\$3.5 billion

in federal revenue in SFY 2010

5

Central Office

Administrative Infrastructure for

- Information Technology Services.
- Quality assurance.
- Policy development and implementation.
- Liaison to federal oversight agencies.
- Human resources.
- Budget.
- Corrective Action Plans.

6

Regional Offices

- Front line for program eligibility & service delivery.
- Eligibility, Child Support, Social Work and Resources functions and staff available in regional offices.
- Manage majority of the client call volume in DSS.
- See clients for applications, redeterminations and interim changes.

7

An Overview of DSS



- Northern Region has offices in Hartford, Manchester, New Britain and Willimantic.
- Southern Region has offices in New Haven, Middletown and Norwich.
- Western Region has offices are in Bridgeport, Stamford, Waterbury, Danbury and Torrington.



A Smaller DSS....



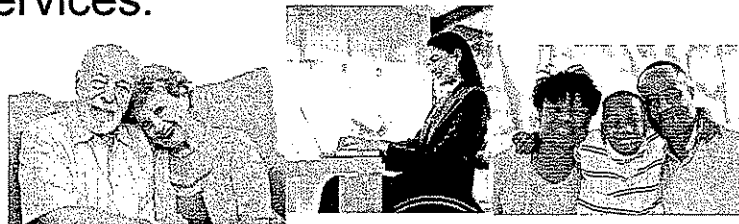
● 2011 versus 2001

- 1,962 staff versus 2,440.
- 12 field offices versus 15 field offices with two outposts.
- Three regions down from five.
- Eligibility Management System (mainframe legacy) implemented in 1989 and still the primary tool for eligibility.

9

... A Growing Client Base

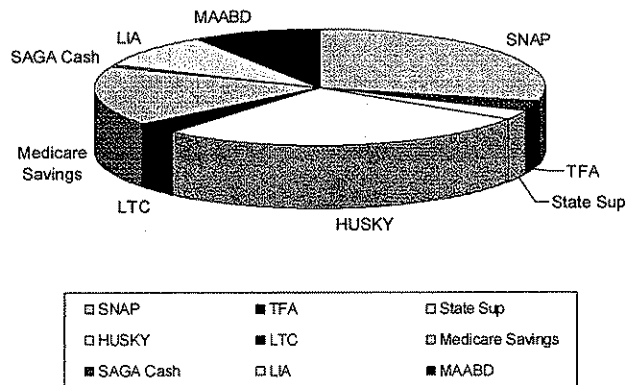
- Provide services to over 750,000 people annually.
- As we have reduced our infrastructure, we have seen enormous growth in our services.



10

Statewide Caseload

Statewide Caseload Composition



11

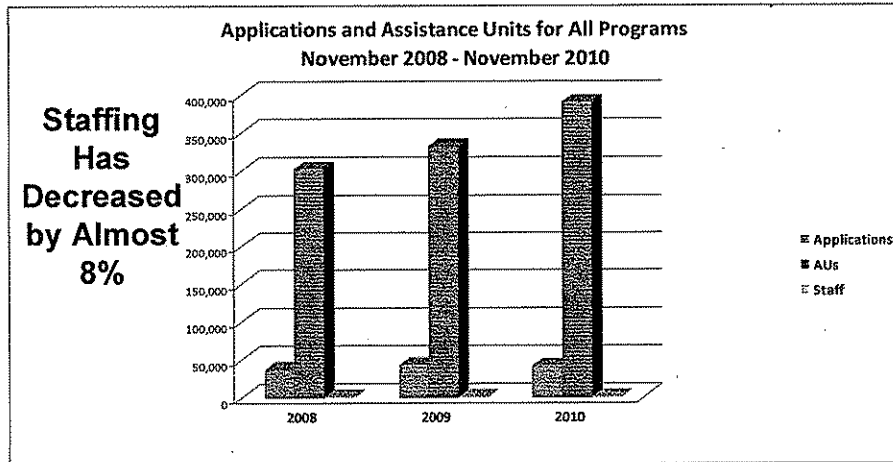
Issues Facing DSS

- Volume
 - Integrated Eligibility
- Program Complexity
- Staffing to Volume Ratio
- Technology

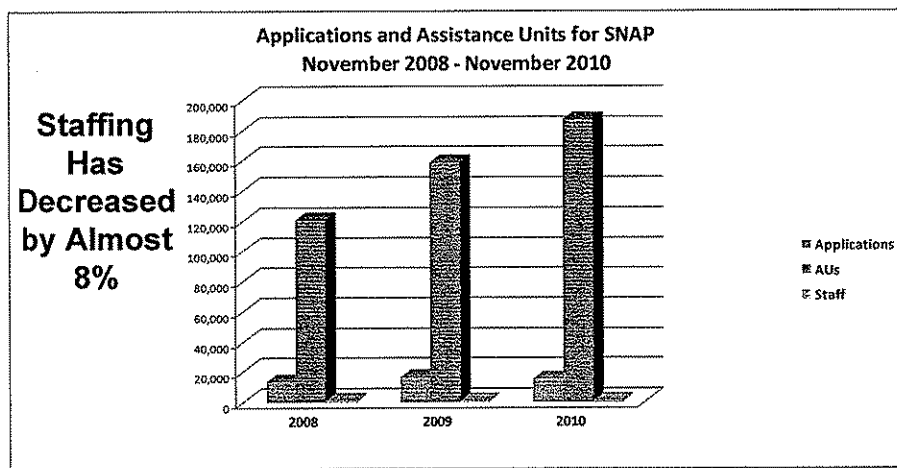


12

Caseloads Continue to Rise 33% Increase in Households 2008 to 2010



SNAP Caseloads 58% Increase in Households 2008 to 2010



Volume & Program Eligibility

- ◉ Provide integrated program eligibility in the regional offices for *(monthly figures)*
- ◉ **Medicaid**
 - 258,259 households; 482,025 active recipients; 10,673 applications
 - Administer 50 coverage groups with differing eligibility rules (non-financial & financial)
- ◉ **Temporary Family Assistance (TFA)**
 - 20,704 households; 46,112 active recipients
 - 2,345 applications
- ◉ **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**
 - 187,341 households; 345,081 active recipients
 - 16,003 applications

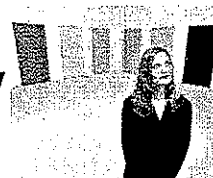


Volume & Integrated Program Eligibility

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">◉ State Supplement<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 15,248 households▪ 841 applications◉ Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB)<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 98,886 households; 1,883 applications▪ Covers the cost of Medicare premiums, deductibles and coinsurance | <ul style="list-style-type: none">◉ Specified Low-Income Medicare Beneficiary (SLMB)<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 9,241 households; 480 applications▪ Pays for Medicare Part B monthly premium only◉ State Administered General Assistance Cash (SAGA)<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 4,792 households; 698 applications◉ Medicaid for Low Income Adults (MLIA)<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 58,677 households; 58,686 active recipients; 8,339 applications |
|--|--|

December 2010 data 16

Integrated Program Eligibility



● Service Focused

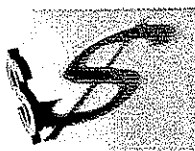
- Residents of CT who come to DSS often need and are eligible for multiple programs

● Built upon the concept of “no wrong door” and “one stop shopping”

● Eligibility Management System (EMS) designed on this concept

- EMS is the primary tool for the determination of eligibility

17



Program Eligibility

Each program has different eligibility factors that must be applied to each household member

● *Non-financial*

- Categorical – which category of services is the person eligible for i.e. family, adult, elderly
- Technical – citizenship, residency, felony status, etc.
- Procedural – social security number, cooperation, etc.

● *Financial*

- Income – Limits, earned, unearned, excluded, gross income, deductions, etc.
- Assets – Type, limits, included, excluded, inaccessible, etc.

18

Program Complexity

What Do Eligibility Staff Do?



- Match client to possible programs
- Interview people
- Obtain information from client and enter data on EMS
- Compare data to eligibility tests in policy using EMS
- Make an eligibility decision
- Provide accommodations for people with disabilities; i.e. larger font notices
- Explain outcome to client
- Match data to other systems
 - Child Support, Social Security, Department of Labor, etc.

19

Program Complexity

What Do Eligibility Staff Do?



- Load information in EMS
- Process applications – either in person, through the mail, or by phone
- Perform Redeterminations and recertification's for on-going eligibility
- Maintain caseloads
 - Interim changes such as address changes, etc.
- Insure accuracy
- Work with other agencies and providers to obtain verifications and services
- Maintain complete and accurate paper records
- Answer telephone calls and respond to client inquiries

20



Snapshot - Eligibility Worker's Average Caseload

● *All Programs Eligibility Staff*

- Intake & Case Maintenance – 1,750 applications and households (assistance units) per worker per month

586 Eligibility Staff Statewide

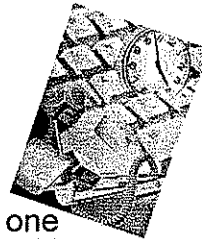
21

Staffing Losses – How Did We Respond?

- 120 Staff lost in 2009 in the Retirement Incentive Program (RIP)
 - 58 Eligibility Staff refills for the 120 retirements
 - Loss of 21 eligibility staff since September 2010 alone
- Temporary Worker Retirees dedicated to SNAP processing to expedite SNAP processing
 - 24 TWR positions ended December 2010
- Authorized Overtime
- Durational Eligibility staff dedicated to SNAP
 - 19 staff due to end on March 31, 2011
 - Only staff dedicated SNAP currently
- Increased responsibilities of supervisors
 - 1 to 15 ratio of supervisors to staff

22

Technology Is Not Working For Us



- EMS is comprised of 428 screens
 - Eligibility staff may have to navigate each one depending on the type of case and household membership.
- EMS is outdated
 - Utilize workarounds in EMS to implement program changes.
 - Workarounds are processes designed to circumvent the computer system allowing for manual work procedures.
 - Requires reprogramming of EMS for implementation of any program policy or procedural changes.
 - Written in COBOL language.

23

Technology Is Not Working For Us



● 879,000 Calls Per Month Are Managed in the Regions

- Phone systems cannot direct callers to the appropriate staff.
- Phone systems differ office by office.

● 3.7 million pieces of paper per month are processed in our offices - Paper, Paper, Paper

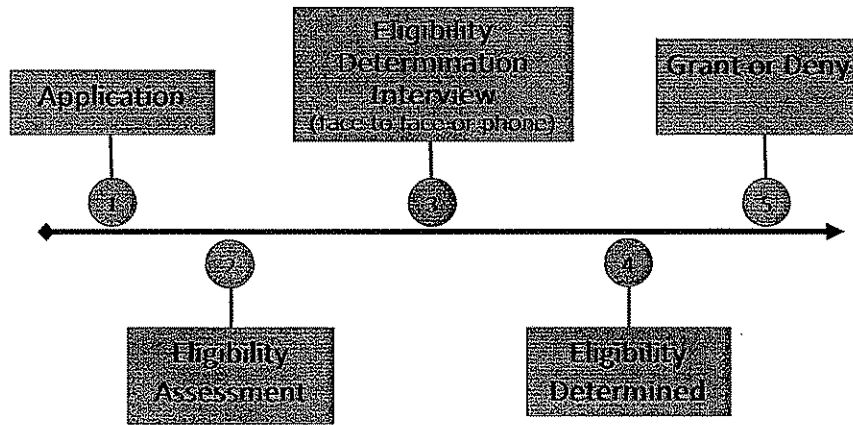
- Documents are mailed into or dropped off at our local offices.
- They are sorted & reviewed so that they may be sent to the appropriate staff person, and then routed to staff.

Mail is received by staff for processing a case, it is sorted and given a priority, reviewed, the case is processed, and then the document is filed.



24

SNAP Application Process



25

SNAP Application Process



26

● Application - How Does DSS Receive Applications

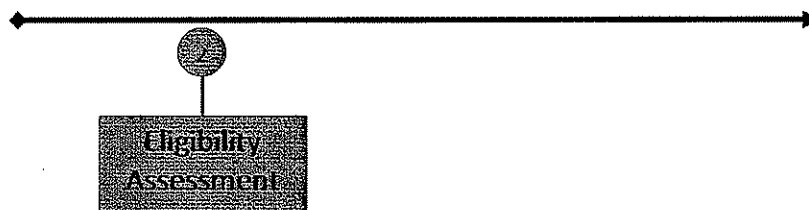
● 16,041 SNAP applications per month (6 month average)

- Walk In - Client comes to DSS to apply
- Mail - Application mailed in
- Fax - Application received by fax from
Community Partners (i.e., End Hunger CT, Hispanic
Health Council, CAAs, CAHS, Outreach Contractors)

● Application can be printed on-line.

27

SNAP Application Process



28



Eligibility Assessment -

What Happens Next?

- First step - enter the application into EMS as soon as it is received to identify the processing requirement.
- Determine
 - Expedited Processing
 - Standard Processing



29



Eligibility Assessment -

What Happens Next?

- **Expedited** – Must be processed and provide SNAP benefits to client within 7 calendar days.
 - Limited income or resources or shelter costs that are greater than monthly income.
 - Household income is less than \$150 per month and assets are less than \$100; or rent and utilities are more than monthly income before deductions; or migrant seasonal farm worker and household's cash and money in the bank is less than \$100.
- **Standard Processing** - Must be processed within 30 days of the date of application

30

SNAP Application Process

Eligibility
Determination
Interview
(face-to-face or phone)

3

31



Eligibility Determination - What Happens Next?

- Upon assessment the case is assigned to an eligibility worker
- Interview must be conducted (in-office or by phone)



32

Eligibility Determination - Expedited Processing



- Case must be processed on EMS no later than the 5th day from date of application to insure SNAP benefits received by client within 7 calendar days.
- An interview must be conducted the day the application is received (or no later than 5 calendar days out)
- Client only needs to verify identity



Eligibility Determination - Standard Processing



- Interview should be conducted or attempted the date the application is filed or received.
- If interview not conducted on date of filing, an interview is scheduled within 10 days and client notified of date and time of interview (no later than 15 days out).
- Must allow 10 days for client to submit any outstanding verification necessary to determine eligibility.
- Complete the case on EMS prior to (if complete) or on the 30th day from the date of application.

SNAP Application Process



35

Eligibility Determination

• Items Considered

- Income
- Living Arrangements
- Circumstances Regarding Purchasing and Preparing of Food Within the Home
- Expenses
- Assets (on limited cases as of 7/1/09)
- Household Composition



36

● Eligibility Determination – Specifically

- Identity
- SSN's for everyone in the household
- Earnings - income tax return if self employed
- All other income received directly by the household (child support, social security, etc.)
- Shelter Costs (rent receipt, mortgage, utility bills, lease)
- "out-of-pocket" i.e.
 - dependent care costs.
 - medical expenses (If anyone is 60 or older or has a disability)
- Child Support Payment obligation
- Immigration status
- Any related information from Medicare



37

SNAP Application Process



38

Grant – Benefit Issued



- Application granted or denied
 - If denied for failure to verify eligibility then we will often see the household apply again
- SNAP benefit notice sent out overnight
- SNAP benefit available next day
- EBT card issued and mailed to client

39

What Is Measured by USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)?

- Payment Errors
- Negative Errors
- Timeliness Issues

40

Payment Errors

- We have made monthly progress in reducing our error rate in 2010.
- Client errors are included in the measurement.
- Payment errors can be Underpayments or Overpayments.

- Statewide Cumulative Payment Error Rate for last six Quality Control review months

04/10	10.42%	08/10	8.23%
05/10	10.52%	09/10	7.78%
06/10	9.98%		
07/10	9.30%		

41

Negative Errors

- We are also making progress on our negative errors.
- Negative Errors Are Erroneous Application Denials And Erroneous Discontinuances.
- The current statewide Negative Error Rate is **26.04%**
- In March our Negative Error Rate was 36.29%

42

Timeliness

- What is Timeliness?
- Timeliness is the measurement of the timely processing of SNAP applications.
- This means providing benefits within 7 days for Expedited Service cases.
- Processing all other applications within 30 days.

43

What is CT's Timeliness Rate?

- Anything less than 90% requires corrective action per FNS

2006 81.43%

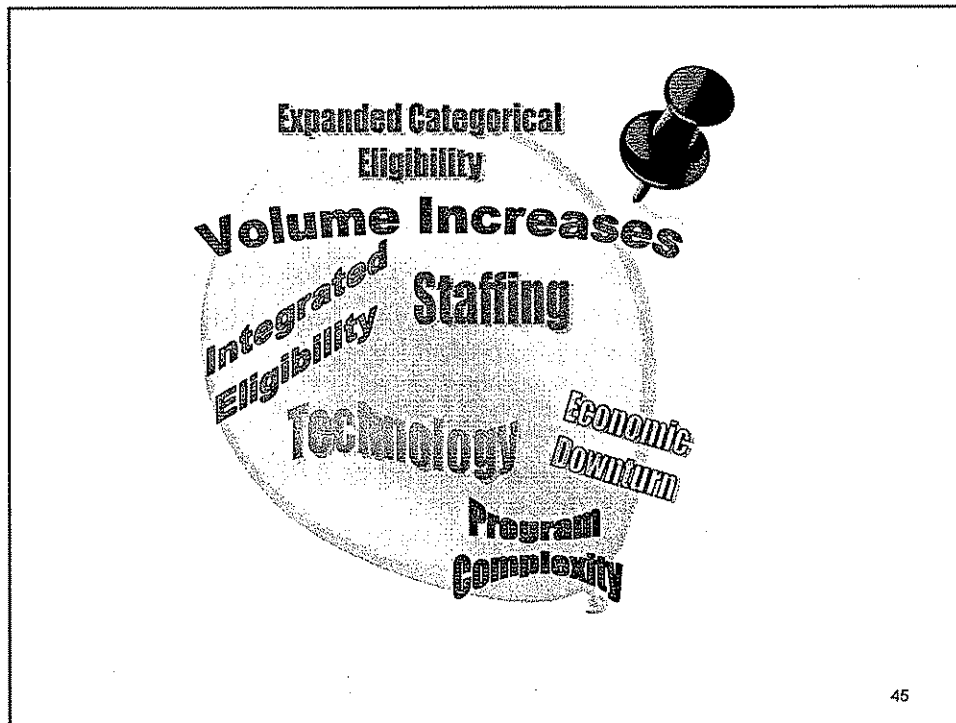
2007 82.99%

2008 83.01%

2009 79.11%

2010 59.49%

44



SNAP – Historical Overview

- To reduce errors and simplify eligibility, DSS implemented Expanded Categorical Eligibility and other policy changes to simplify program rules and minimize the potential for errors.
 - Expanded Categorical Eligibility, implemented July 1, 2009, allows households to qualify with monthly incomes less than 185% of the Federal Poverty Level (\$2,823 per month for a family of three) and with no asset test.
 - DSS also changed the way we consider utility costs in July 2009, which increased SNAP benefits for most households.
- In FFY 2006, Connecticut's SNAP Payment Error Rate was 5.46%; below the national average of 5.99%.
- In FFY 2008, however, our Payment Error Rate increased to 8.16% while the national average decreased to 5.01%, exposing us to potential federal sanctions.

SNAP – Historical Overview

- 58% increase in SNAP households from 2008 to 2010
 - The economic downturn also has increased the number of SNAP households.
 - 118,060 in Oct. 2008, increasing to 187,341 in Dec. 2010
- Staffing losses and increased SNAP households have increased the caseloads of staff by 68%
 - While DSS was able to reduce the Payment Error Rate (PER) from 8.16% in FFY 2008 to 5.15% in FFY 2009, increased caseloads been detrimental in maintaining our PER
- The national average has dropped to 3.69% as states implement modernization efforts.
 - DSS is focusing resources on improving our PER, however sustainable reductions will be difficult without modernizing the delivery of services to our clients.

47

CT and the National Trend

Federal Fiscal Year	CT Error Rate PER	National Average PER	Considerations
2006	5.46%	5.99%	CT below the National Average
2008	8.16%	5.01%	● Increase in SNAP households
2009	5.15%	4.36%	● Retirements ● Expanded Eligibility – 28% increase in caseloads
2010	7.78%	3.68%	● Caseloads grow as economy worsens

48

Competing Priorities



- Regional Processing Units to increase access to HUSKY and improve the timeliness of processing applications for Pregnant Women.
- Charter Oak.
- Medicaid for Low-Income Adults.
- ARRA Funding – expanded Weatherization, Community Services Block Grant, etc.
- Increased applications and caseloads in other programs.
- Medicare Savings Programs.
- Money Follows The Person.
- Implemented over 40 legislative healthcare initiatives in 2007.
- Long-Term Care Facility Closures.
- Enhancements to the Connecticut Child Support Enforcement System (CCSES).
- Connect-Ability.
- Children's Trust Fund merger in 2009.

49

How Are Other States Improving

- Technology, Technology, Technology.
 - They are modernizing.
 - Interactive Voice Response; Call Centers; Automated Calling Service; On-Line Data Access
- Receive federal performance bonus for reinvestment into the SNAP program and to create eligibility efficiencies.



ITS Challenges

- Each programmatic change, expansion or new program requires significant ITS resources.
- Making changes to the ITS systems are cumbersome and labor intensive.
- There are 500 change requests in the queue for EMS.



51

What Actions Has CT Taken To Respond?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ● Seeking Technology Improvements – Modernization of Client Service Delivery Project. | ● Accountability Measures Increased. |
| ● Staffing Enhancements. | ● EMS Changes To Create More Efficient Eligibility Processing. |
| ● Eligibility Process Re-Design. | ● Policy changes. |
| ● Training. | ● Partnerships with Outreach Contractors and Community Action Agencies. |
| ● Best Practices. | |
| ● Waivers and Options | |

52

Actions - Modernization of Client Service Delivery



- Initiated in 2008.
- Currently in the design phase.
- Negotiating terms and conditions with vendor.
- 21 month implementation timeline (once contract is finalized).
- Document Imaging; Interactive Voice Response; Web Access for Benefit Updates; Allow for Business Re-design.

53

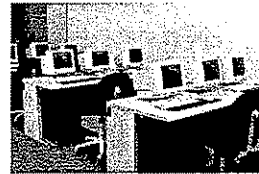
Eligibility Management System Replacement

- Governor's budget commits funding for planning for replacement of the Eligibility Management System.
 - Staffing for system planning and design.
 - Consultative services for development of RFP.
 - Maximization of federal funding opportunities.

54

Actions – Piloting Eligibility Process Re-Design

- Implementing SNAP only units / SNAP Teams.
- Designate Specific Staff For SNAP Application Evaluation – Eligibility Supervisors.
- HUSKY / SNAP Call Center.
- Re-design Reception Room Processes.
- Best Practices Workgroups.
- SNAP Leadership Summit.



Hidden slide

- Redetermination Delays
 - We will begin utilizing clerical support staff to initiate redeterminations and identify cases that have been closed for failure to recertify, cases about to close for failure to recertify and redetermination documents that include requests for SNAP.
 - The redetermination documents will be sorted by priority and delivered to the supervisor to ensure that they are acted upon within the standard of promptness.
 - We also plan to train clerical staff to screen the SNAP applications before returning the documents to the supervisor.
 - By doing so we create the pending application alert giving the supervisors and managers an additional monitoring mechanism.
 - We are in the process of identifying appropriate staff, scheduling training and developing the protocols and processes.
- Manchester
 - Family
 - HUSKY redeterminations assigned to one so remaining staff can concentrate on SNAP.
 - One group of staff process applications, while the remaining staff process redeterminations.
 - The target date for this change - March 1st.
 - In the meantime - all the SNAP applications are getting loaded by one supervisor and a 1348 being sent out if needed.
 - If the application can be processed, it is being flagged and given to a worker for processing.
 - Clerical staff assisting, initiating redeterminations or loading applications as needed.

Hidden

- Adult
 - Flag the Expedited SNAP cases and giving them to a Lead Worker to process.
 - Intake and Case Maintenance are already separated out.
- Middletown
 - People working on SNAP and the other programs total 37.
 - Of the 37, one (dual ESW) is solely devoted to SNAP processing. Assigned a limited number of applications.
 - This office has created a SNAP/add-a program unit that consists of one specialist, four ESW's and the above dual worker.
 - This unit handles all the SNAP apps and other add-a-program requests generated out of the two case maintenance units.
 - The Intake unit handles all the new SNAP requests.
 - Two staff see most of the walk-ins.
 - Process the expedited SNAP ASAP and keep all of the applications that they see.
 - The rest of Intake, four staff, process all the mail-in requests.
 - The TFA unit, five specialist staff, handles intake and case maintenance for all the time-limited cases.
 - The case maintenance staff, Adult (9) and Family (7), handles all SNAP redeterminations.
 - The above #s total 33 line staff. The four supervisors make up the difference.

57

Hidden

- Waterbury
 - Mail in's opened
 - 4 eligibility units (non intake / convalescent)
 - Manage interim changes and redeterminations
 - 1/2 of each unit processors
 - 1/2 are on phones
 - Initiate redeterminations in every unit
 - Person screens all applications
 - Identifies expedited
 - Set up tickler for 3 months
 - Set up interview, send 1348, process expedited
 - Dual worker handles SNAP recertification's mostly

58

Hidden

- **DSS-New Britain**
- **Recently Implemented SNAP Error-Reduction Measures**
- The combined pressures of steadily increasing caseloads, diminished staff resources, and the agency's anticipated Modernization plans have all impacted the New Britain office's approach to SNAP casework. Described below are four (4) changes in case processing with a direct impact on SNAP operations with the distinct objective of seriously decreasing the office's program error rate.
- **HUSKY/SNAP Call Center.** Composed of fourteen (14) Eligibility Services Workers, a fully-functioning Call Center was implemented in November of 2010. The Call Center features two (2) dedicated staff who personally answer and respond to client inquiries concerning application and redetermination status, updates or clarifications on requested information to be submitted, and deadlines for submission.
- The remaining staff rotate through the Call Center during the workday to listen, and follow-up on eight (8) voice mail boxes carefully scripted to explain and request information on the common client changes that impact SNAP eligibility and/or benefit amount. These same voice mail options and functions are provided for our Spanish-speaking clients through a parallel Call Center telephone line.
- This new structure has drastically reduced the number of calls reaching these twelve (12) staff since the Call Center's inception. Fewer calls have provided additional time to complete and focus on high priority activities throughout the day. To date, both staff and clients have reported back favorably.
- **Structured Processing.** Knowing that the number and volume of competing priorities throughout the day creates SNAP errors, eligibility processing will be adopting a new approach to handling the most pressing and highest priority functions. After "Opening Up" their caseloads for the day, Eligibility staff will follow a prescribed schedule that focuses and concentrates on two of the largest areas of SNAP operations: applications and redeterminations. Working closely with clerical staff, Unit Supervisors will ensure that incoming work is forwarded and completed as close to the day received as possible, thus eliminating any 'lost' information and decreasing the time an application pends.
- **Express SNAP Grants.** Incoming SNAP applications that are found to have all the required information needed for grant, will be tagged and forwarded to an Eligibility Services Worker dedicated to processing as many of these as possible throughout the day.
- **Redetermination Initiation.** The office currently has four (4) Clerical Support staff who initiate incoming Redetermination forms each month. Upon completion, the EMS case narrative is also updated. This allows other Clerical staff, Call Center staff, Supervisors and any party with EMS access to verify the status of the form. This process was recently expanded to include more clerical staff to increase monthly output.

59

Hidden Slide

- **Willimantic**
 - changes to enhance the timeliness, accuracy, and reduce the error rates for SNAP clients. The Intake Unit is functions has been simplified into Five categories for completion which are.
 - 1. SNAP Application Basket - The assigned worker enters all new applications that come in for the day. That worker also schedules necessary phone appointments and sends out W-1348's for requested information. Completed daily by one worker.
 - 2. Saga Cash, State Supplement Basket - The assigned worker grants Saga cash and state supplement. Completes the required W-1348s for outstanding income and asset information. Completed daily by One worker.
 - 3. Medical S02 / LIA Basket - The assigned worker screens and grants cases. Send out W-1348s for requested information. Shared task which is completed by two workers.
 - 4. W-1348's Basket - the assigned worker completes task related to W-1328s which has been returned to the office. Completed daily by One worker.
 - 5. Interim Action Basket - The assigned worker completes Interim activities. Completed daily by One worker.
 - This process has structured the workers day. There are Three intake workers, each worker has two functions each day. In addition, Alerts are supervised the lead worker along with the supervisor. The phone calls for intake has been designated to one line. These changes in the past two months has increased the offices ability to manage SNAP applications timely, accurately and has reduce errors. The workers are excited about having simplified tasks and excited about having the flexibility to move within each specified task. Walk-ins continue to be handled on a rotating basis.
 - Another change has been the call center. Clients of all programs are able to utilize Client Services One and Client Services Two lines to get answers to their SNAP program as well as other programs answered in an expeditiously manner.

60



Actions – Training

- Expedited SNAP
- Income Deductions in SNAP
- Simplified Reporting for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- SNAP Back to Basics
- Conducting Effective Telephone Interviews for SNAP
- Managing the Application Process
- Settlement Series: Alvarez vs. Aronson
- Conducting Effective Supervisory Case Reviews
- Overview of SNAP
- Basic SNAP Policy & Processing
- Negative Errors in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- SNAP and the Quality Control Process
- SNAP Assistance Unit Composition
- Best Practices Guide
- What Do I Do First? (Priorities Document)
- Desk Guides

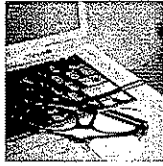
61

Actions – Accountability Measures Increased

- Reporting
 - Error Rates by Office Sent Every Month
 - Error Data by Region Sent Every Month
 - Overdue applications report
 - Ad hoc report
- Mandated Supervisory Case Reviews
- Local Quality Control Review Sweeps
- Error review calls with QC, Training, SNAP policy and regional staff
- Bi-weekly calls with FNS



62



Actions – EMS Changes

- Enhance EMS so all SNAP households receive a proper notice.
 - EMS sends appropriate notice to clients which reduces questions and phone calls.
- Notice of Missed Interview (NOMI).
 - EMS will initiate NOMI if client misses interview without eligibility worker intervention – saves time and assists staff to meet processing timelines.
- Expanded Certification Periods from 6 to 12 months.
 - Streamlines process for clients and creates less work for eligibility staff.

63

Actions – Policy Changes



- Expanded Categorical Eligibility
 - Eliminated the asset test for most applicants and recipients. Time saver for workers.
- Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) Dollar
 - Greatly reduced SUA Quality Control errors.
 - SUA was our #1 payment error - this has almost eliminated it.
- Enhanced SNAP Deductions Screen
 - Made it easier to enter deductions on EMS; medical deductions is a top 10 QC error

64

Actions – Policy Changes

- Automated Notice of Missed Interview (NOMI)
 - Completed to reduce this #1 negative error
- Purchase and Prepare Narration
 - Time saver for staff - no longer have to obtain written verification of purchase and prepare. Just verbal verification and narrate it.
- Reinstatement Waiver
 - Time saver - Workers can reinstate rather than have client reapply if they return within 30 days of being discontinued.

65

Actions – Policy Changes



- Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) Work Rules Suspended Due to Economy
 - Time saver - ABAWD rules are not in EMS and are complex.
- Telephone Interview Waiver
 - We were limited to when we could do telephone interviews. All others were face-to-face. Now almost all are by telephone.

66

Actions – Partnerships

- Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS)
- End Hunger Connecticut!
- Hispanic Health Council
- E-fax initiative – End Hunger CT!
- Community Action Agencies – Human Services Infrastructure



67

SNAP E-Fax Initiative

- For past two years collaborated with End Hunger Connecticut (EHC!) and its partners to facilitate the submission of SNAP applications electronically via E-Fax in Hartford.
 - Proven effective and advantageous to SNAP applicants/recipients and the partners who take part in the initiative.
- Each month EHC submits an average of 150 applications electronically to a designated contact person.
- The transfer of the applications is cost effective and swift.
 - The system provides significant advantages in monitoring and tracking the submission of the application and supporting documents and allows for the storage of these documents if necessary.
- E-Fax initiative also positively impacts the agency's efforts to enhance the processing accuracy rate and to enhance community participation in the SNAP program.⁶⁸

Responding – To Improve, We Are

- Exploring partnership enhancements with Outreach contractors, Community Action Agencies and other community based Non-Profits.
 - Application and recertification preparedness.
 - Identification of expedited cases.
 - Follow-up on verifications.
 - Facilitate rapid processing of SNAP cases.
 - Exploring waiver to conduct interviews and assess applications.

69

Responding – To Improve, We Are

- Enterable Application Form – will be able to enter data into application and print.
 - Applications will come in with typed data which is easier to process.
- Training – Top 10 Error Elements.
 - Insure staff are aware and can prevent additional errors.
- Overtime – OT to process SNAP eligibility.

70

Responding – To Improve, We Are

- EMS change - Automation of the Notice of Expedited Eligibility – 3/31/11.
 - Will allow us to more accurately identify cases eligible for expedited processing.
- Implementation of SNAP Leadership Summit Workgroups.
 - Short term workgroups to refine strategies in technology, training, accountability and business process design to prevent errors.
- Explore SSA combined application process.
- E-Fax expansion to other offices.

71

Responding – To Improve, We Are

- Interactive Voice Response
 - Late Spring
 - IVR solution to give short term real relief in advance of modernization implementation.
- Filling vacant positions.

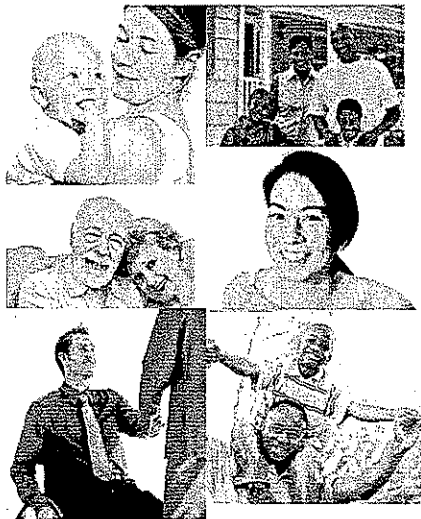
72



Responding – To Improve, We Are

- **Technology** is the most effective tool for responding to the error rate and to meet the growing needs of the people of our state.
 - Example after example in other states show this to be true.
- We continue to create stronger policy, to access new resources and to change our business processes.
- Investing in the technology infrastructure is the key.

73



Your Questions

74

